RB75425

Library

of the

University of Toronto

THE

WITTY AND ENTERTAINING

EXPLOITS

OF

GEORGE BUCHANAN,

COMMONLY CALLED

THE KING'S FOOL.

PRINTED AND SOLD BY W. & T. FORDYCE,
15, GREY STREET, NEWCASTLE.

GEORGE BUCHANAN.

MR. GEORGE BUCHANAN was a Scotchman born, and, though of mean parentage, made great progreſs in learning. As for his underſtanding and ready wit, he excelled all men then alive in that age that ever propoſed queſtions to him. He was ſervant or teacher to King James VI. as his private counſellor, but publicly he acted as fool.

It happened one day, that a young airy nobleman went into the king's garden, to pull a flower for a young lady he fancied. George followed at a diſtance: ſo when the young man found a flower to his pleaſure, he would not pull it, but to find it again without further ſearching, he covered it with his hat, and went away with his ſweetheart. No ſooner was he gone, but up goes George, lifts the hat, pulls the flower, then eaſes himſelf on the ſpot, and covers it with the hat again, and away he goes. Soon after the young gentleman returned, leading his ſweetheart, to pull the flower below the hat; but as ſoon as he lifted the hat, and ſaw what was below it, he looked like a fool; and the lady flying in a paſſion, ſet off, and would never countenance him any more. The young

gentleman being ſadly vexed at this affront given him by George, ſent him a challenge to fight him, appointing day and place where they were to meet. Being to fight on horſeback, George gets an old ſtiff horſe, and for harneſsing covers him about with blown bladders, with small ſtones in each, without either ſword or ſpear; away to the field he goes, where the duel was appointed. So when George ſaw his enemy coming againſt him, all in glittering armour, armed with ſword and ſpear, he made up to him with all the ſpeed his horſe would carry him; when the ſmall ſtones made ſuch a rattling noiſe, that the gentleman's fine gelding would not ſtand the battle, but ran away, and threw his maſter to the ground, which cauſed all the ſpectators to laugh and ſay, the gentleman was more fool than George. The gentleman being ſtill more enraged at this ſecond affront, he would fight with George on foot; but his friends perſuaded him that it would be no honour for him to fight and kill the king's fool, and far leſs to be killed by the fool: ſo they were adviſed both to agree. But the gentleman would try another exploit with George, for to have it ſaid he was the cleverеſt man—viz. to hold him a jumping bout publicly, the next day thereafter. With all my heart, ſays George,

and we will end in and about where we began; they not knowing his meaning in this. The place and hour being ſet where they were to meet next morning, George, in the night-time, cauſed a deep pit to be made, and the earth of it carried away; then filled it up with dung from a privy, and covered it over with green turf, that it might not be known from the other ground. So, according to promiſe, they both met in the morning at the appointed time. Now, George being the oldeſt man, and by them counted the greateſt fool, the young ſpark permitted him to jump firſt; which he, according to order, did, and jumped within a foot of the place where the ground was falsified. The young man ſeeing this, made his performance with great airs, and all his might, ſo that he jumped a foot over George, and up to his oxters in clean dung; whereat the whole multitude of ſpectators cried out with loud huzzas and laughter. Now, ſays George, I told you we would end in and about where we began, and that is in clean dirt.

On a time after this, the king and his court were going into the country, and they would have George to ride before them in the fool's dress; whereunto he ſeemed unwilling, but it was the king's pleaſure. So George was mounted upon an old horſe,

with the heels hanging down, and a palmer coat, patched over with pictures of divers kinds. George rode before them in this poſture, which cauſed great laughter and diverſion, until they came to an inn, where they alighted to dine; and in the time they were at dinner, George went into the ſtables, and with a knife cut all their horſes' chafts, not ſore, but juſt ſo as they might bleed. Now, as ſoon as dinner was over, and they mounted their horſes again, George riding before them as uſual, in his palmer coat and old boots, they began to make their game of him; then George turning about ſuddenly, clapping his hands with a loud laughter, the king aſked him what made him laugh ſo? Laugh! ſays George; how can I but laugh when horſes cannot hold their peace? O my ſovereign! ſays he, don't you ſee how your horſes have rent their chafts laughing at my old boots? Then every man looking at his horſe's chafts, they were all in a rage againſt George. The king cauſed George to diſmount directly, and charged him never to let him ſee his face on Engliſh ground. Now, George knowing that nothing could reconcile the king at this time, he came away to Scotland, and cauſed to be made a pair of great boots, and put a quantity of Scotch earth to each of them,

and away he goes for London, to see the king once more. He hearing the king and his court were to pass through a country village, George places himself in an old window, and sets up his bare a—e to the king and his court as they passed. The king being greatly amazed to see such an unusual honour done to him, was curious to know the performer; so he called unto him, desiring him to come down; and finding it to be George, Sir, says the king, did I not charge you never to let me see your face again. True, my sovereign, says George, for which cause I let you see my a—e. But, says the king, you was never to come on English ground again. Neither I did, says George, pulling off his boots before the king—behold, my sovereign, its all Scotch earth I stand upon. The king and his court being greatly diverted with this merry joke, George was again admitted to the king's favour.

About this time, the French king, in order to pick a quarrel with the court of Britain, sent a letter to the king, desiring it to be read before the parliament; and the writing was as follows: 'Will I come? will I come? will I come?' This letter being read before the king and his courtiers, they all concluded that the French king designed to invade England; there-

fore they ordered an answer to be wrote, upbraiding him with the breach of peace, and putting him in mind of the laſt treaty. The anſwer being read over before the king and his nobles, they all agreed that it ſhould be ſent off. But George, ſmiling and ſhaking his head, ſaid—

Many men, many minds:
Who knows what he designs?

They then aſked George what he thought the French king meant by ſuch a letter? To which he anſwered, I ſuppoſe he wants an invitation to come over and dine with you, and then return in a friendly manner; but you are going to charge him with a breach of peace, before he has given any ſignal of offence. His letter is indeed dark and myſtical, but ſend him an anſwer according to his queſtion. Now, George being ordered to write the anſwer, it was as follows:—"And ye come—and ye come—and ye come." This being ſent to the French king, he admired it beyond expreſſion, ſaying, It was more valiant and daring than he expected. So the enmity he intended was extinguiſhed, and turned into love.

It happened once that a malignant party in Scotland ſent up a great ſportſman to the king and parliament, for ſeducing of the church: George hearing of his coming,

went away and met him on the bridge, and the ſalutation that he gave him was, the cutting off his head, and throwing it over the bridge! He then run to the king with all his might, and fell down before him, pleading moſt heartily for a pardon, or without it he was a dead man. The king moſt ſeriouſly aſked him what he had done now? To which he anſwered, he had only thrown the Scots biſhop's hat over the bridge; which made the king to laugh, to hear him ask pardon for ſuch a ſmall fault. But he had no ſooner got the pardon ſealed by the king, than he ſaid, Indeed, my Sovereign, I threw his hat over the bridge, but his head was in it. Geordy, Geordy, ſays the King, thou wilt never give over till thou be hanged.

A nobleman in England agreed with the king, how to put a trick upon George, to try his manly courage in ſending him to a certain place for a bag of money. On his way home through St. James's Park, they engaged a ſturdy fellow to attack him on the way, and take the money from him. The fellow being armed with ſword and piſtol, came up briskly and attacked George with theſe words: You, ſir, deliver what money you have, or you are a dead man. To which George anſwered—Sir, I have ſome, indeed, but 'tis not my own, & there-

fore do not like to part with it: nevertheleſs, being determined, as you ſeem to be, to exchange blows for it, pray do me the favour to fire your piſtol through the flap of my coat, that the owners may ſee I have been in danger of my life before I parted with it; which he accordingly did. No ſooner had he fired the piſtol, than George whips out his hanger from below his coat, and with one ſtroke cut off the fellow's right hand, wherein he held his ſword, and both ſword and hand fell to the ground; but George lifted his hand and carried it to the King. No ſooner did he come before them, but they asked him, ſaying, Well, George, did you ſee any body to trouble you by the way? None, ſaid he, but one fellow, who was going to take the money from me; but I made him give me his hand he would not do the like again. You did? ſays the fellow's maſter. Yes I did, ſays George, let work bear witneſs, throwing down the fellow's hand on the table before them all.

George happened one time to be in company with a biſhop, and ſo they began to education, wherein he blanked the biſhop ſo remarkably, that the biſhop himſelf owned he was worſted. Then one of the company addreſſed George with theſe words: Thou Scot ſhould not have left

thy country. For what reaſon? ſays George. Becauſe thou haſt carried all the wiſdom that is in it hither with thee. No, no, ſays George, the ſhepherds in Scotland will diſpute with any biſhop in London, and exceed them very far in education. The biſhop took this as an affront, and ſeveral noblemen affirmed it to be as the Scot had ſaid: Bets were laid on each ſide, and three of the biſhops were choſen, and ſent away to Scotland, to diſpute it with the ſhepherds, accompanied with ſeveral others, who were to bear witneſs of what they ſhould hear paſs between them. Now, George knowing which way they went, took another road, and was in Scotland before them. He then made acquaintance with a ſhepherd on the border, whoſe paſture lay by the road-ſide where the biſhops were to paſs; and there he mounted himſelf in a ſhepherd's dreſs, and when he ſaw the biſhops appear, he conveyed his flock to the road-ſide, and fell a chanting at a Latin ballad. When the biſhops came up to George, one of them asked him in French, what o'clock it was? To which he anſwered, in Hebrew, it is directly about the time of the day it was yeſterday at this time. Another asked him in Greek, what countryman he was? To which he anſwered, in Flemiſh, If you knew that, you

would be as wise as myſelf. A third asked him, in Dutch, where he was educated? To which he anſwered in Gaelic, Herding my ſheep between this and Lochaber. This they desired him to explain in Engliſh, which he immediately did. Now, ſays one of them, we need proceed no further. What, ſays George, are you butchers? I'll sell you a few ſheep. To this they made no anſwer, but went away ſhamefully, ſaying, they believed the Scots had been through all the nations in the world for their education, or the devil had taught them. Now, when George had ended this diſpute with the biſhops, he ſtripped off his ſhepherd's dreſs, and up through England he goes, with all the haſte imaginable, ſo that he arrived at the place from whence they ſet out, three days before the judges, and went every day asking if they were come, ſo that he might not be ſuſpected. As ſoon as they arrived, all that were concerned in the diſpute, and many more, came crowding in to hear what news from the Scottiſh ſhepherds, and to know what had been done. No ſooner had the three gentlemen declared what had paſſed between the biſhops and the ſhepherds, whom they found on the Scots border, but the old biſhop made anſwer, And think you, ſaid he, that a ſhepherd could

anſwer theſe queſtions? It has been none elſe but the devil, for the Scots miniſters themſelves could not do it—they are but ignorant of ſuch matters—a parcel of beardleſs boys. Then George thought it was time to take ſpeech in hand. Well, my Lord Biſhop, ſays George, you call them a parcel of ignorant, beardleſs boys; you have a great long beard yourſelf, and if grace was meaſured by beards, you biſhops and the goats would have it all, and that will be quite averſe to ſcripture. What, ſays the biſhop, are you a Scot? Yes, yes, ſays George, I am a Scot. Well, ſays the biſhop, and what is the difference between a Scot and a ſot? Nothing at preſent, ſaid George, but the breadth of the table; there being a table betwixt the biſhop and George. So the biſhop went off in a high paſsion, while the whole multitude were like to ſplit their jaws with laughter.

About this time there was an act of parliament for the benefit of murderers, that any perſon who committed murder, if they forfeited five hundred merks, which went under the name of KIN-BOOT, becauſe ſo much of this fine went to the murdered perſon's neareſt relations, as the price of blood, the murderer got a remit. Now, George knowing this to be contrary to

Moſes's law, was grieved very much to ſee ſo many pardons ſealed with the King's hand for murder, almoſt one every week, it being ſo uſual for the King to ſubſcribe them, that he would not read them, nor enquire what they were; for which cauſe George writes a right to the crown, and ſent it to the king to be ſubſcribed, which he actually did, and never looking what it was, returned it to George. No ſooner had he received it, but he goes to the king, and told him it was not time for him to be ſitting there: whereat the king, greatly amazed, ſtarted up; then George, in a great haſte, ſet himſelf down in the king's chair, forthwith declaring himſelf to be king, ſaying, You who was king muſt be my fool, for I am now the wiſeſt man. The king was greatly offended at this, until George ſhewed him the ſeal and ſubſcription. But from that day forth the king knew what he ſubſcribed.

The next pardon that came to be ſealed by the king, was to a gentleman who had killed two men before, and had gotten pardons for them by money. This being the third, the king was very ſilent in looking over it; George ſtanding by, aſked what he was going to ſeal now? To which he anſwered, it is a remit for a man who has killed three men at ſundry times. I gave

him two remits before. O! ſays George, he has killed but one man. And who killed the other two? ſays the king. You did, ſays George, for if you had given him juſtice when he killed the firſt, he had killed no more. When the king heard theſe words, he threw down the pen, and declared that ſuch an act to ſave a murderer ſhould be null ever after by him.

One time George having no money, he goes away, and gets a pick and ſpade, and then falls a digging at a corner of the king's palace; which the king perceiving from his window, calls out what he was wanting there? Are you going to undermine my houſe and make it fall? No, my ſovereign, ſaid George; but it is verily reported that there is plenty of money about this houſe, and where can it be? ſays George, I cannot find it; for it is not within the houſe to do me ſervice; then ſurely it muſt be below it. O George, ſays the king, that is a crave after the new faſhion; what money you want I'll order it for you. Then, my ſovereign, ſays George, I'll dig no more.

One time George being in the country, he arrived at an inn, where he alighted to refreſh himſelf and his horſe. The innkeepers charged him double price for every thing he called for. George never grum-

bled at this, but gave him all his demands, and away he goes on his journey. At the inn where he quartered the next night, he was uſed after the ſame manner, if not worſe. Having little farther to go, he returned next day, and came to the ſame inn where he had been two nights before. So, when he alighted, the boy asked him what he would give his horſe? What you will, ſays he. The maſter of the inn came into his room before ſupper, and asked him what he would have for ſupper? What you will, landlord, ſays he. After ſupper, and a hearty bowl to put all down, he went to bed. On the morrow he roſe very early, and called for the boy to make ready his horſe in all haſte, for he intended to mount and go directly. Soon after he went into the ſtable where the boy was, calling for his horſe, when he mounted with all the ſpeed he could, and gave the boy a piece of money, ſaying, Here, my boy, this is for taking care of my horſe,—I have paid for all I called for in the houſe—and off he goes.

About mid-day he alighted again at an inn to refreſh himſelf and his horſe, and there he chanced to be in company with his other landlord, who uſed him ſo badly. Sir, ſays George, I believe I was in your houſe two nights ago. O yes, sir, ſays he, I mind of you pretty well. And where

was you laſt night? Laſt night! ſays George, I was in one of the inns, and the civileſt landlord I ever had in my life; they brought all things to me that I ſtood in need of, without calling for them; and when I came away this morning they charged me nothing, and I paid nothing but sixpence to the boy for dreſsing my horſe. Blood and wounds! ſaid the old fellow, then I'll go there this night. Ay, do, ſays George, and mind this, when they ask you what you will have for yourself and your horſe, anſwer, What you will, sir. George ſmiled within himself to think how he had got one extortioner to take amends of the other. So this innkeeper ſet off on his journey, and rode ſo late that night, that he might reach the cheap inn, that moſt of the people had gone to bed before he arrived. As ſoon as he dismounted from horſe, the boy enquired of him, What ſhall I have to your horſe, maſter? To which he answered, What you will, my boy. The boy hearing this, ran away up ſtairs, leaving him and his horſe ſtanding at the door, to his maſter's room, crying, maſter, maſter, What you will is come again:—O the rogue! cries he, where is he? I'll cane him—I'll what you will with him by and by!—And to him he runs with his cane, licks and kicks him until he was

hardly able to mount his horſe again, and would give him no entertainment there; which cauſed him ride a whole winter night, after he had got his bones all beat and bruiſed. So the one purſued the other as a murderer; and his defence was, That he was a cheat, and a ſcorner of his houſe;—until the truth was found out.

After this, George being in Cornwall about buſiness, where he chanced to run short of money, and not knowing how to make his way to London without it, being acquainted with none in that country, but knowing his landlord to be loyal to government, and a great favourite of the king his master, he takes a piece of brick, and brays it into small powder, mixed with a little chalk, so that it might seem in colour like arsenic, which is poison; then tying it up in two papers, wrote on the one, "Strong poison for the king;" and upon the other, "Slow poison for the queen." Out he goes on purpose, and leaves the parcels on the table, where he knew they would be looking at them; the landlord perceived the directions. So in comes George in a great haste, and calls out, O landlord! did you see two small parcels I have lost? I know not what to do, for it was my main business to take them to London. O you murdering rogue! cries the landlord, I will have you hanged for what you intend. George hearing this made off, but the landlord calling for assistance, he was apprehended, made prisoner of state, and conducted to London by a troop of horse; where the people knowing him, told the guard who he was; they hearing this, slipped away shamefully one by one, George thanking them for their good company and safe convoy.

George one day easing himself at the corner of a

hedge, was espied by an English squire, who began to mock him, asking him, Why he did not keckle like the hens? But George, whose wit was always ready, told him he was afraid to keckle, lest he should come and snatch up the egg. Which rebuff made the squire walk off as mute as a fish.

George was met one day by three bishops, who paid him the following compliments;—Says the first, Good day, father Abraham; the second, Good day, father Isaac; the third, Good day, father Jacob. To which he replied—I am neither father Abraham, father Isaac, nor father Jacob; but I am Saul the son of Kish, sent out to seek my father's asses, and lo! I have found three of them. Which answer convinced the bishops that they had mistaken their man.

There was a bell at Dalkeith, which the Popish clergy made use of to extort confession from the ignorant people, in the following manner:—They told the persons whom they suspected guilty, the bell would rive at the touch of a guilty person, but if not guilty, it would not. By these means they generally frightened the ignorant into confession; for if the bell would rive, the person was then to be condemned to death. But they managed the matter so, that the bell was never brought to trial, till George did as follows: He was imprisoned for saying, That the Pope was fallible himself, and could not pardon the sins of others. George owned he did so, but would refer to the bell whether he was guilty or not. The priests, though unwilling, were obliged to comply.—George touched the bell, repeating as before, The Pope is fallible, and cannot pardon sin; moreover added, The Pope and the clergy are impostors; & thereupon touched the bell, referring to it for the truth; but the bell not rending, the priests were disgraced as impostors, George was honourably acquitted, and the bell laid aside.

George being sent to Paris about some business,

went from thence to Versailles to see the French king's court; and being known there by several of the courtiers, who had been at the English court, one of them took occasion to tell the French king, that George was one of the wittiest men in England; upon which, the French king desired to see him; which he did, but George, it seems, was out of humour, or seemingly so, and spoke but little to the purpose, so that the French king told the nobleman who commended him for such wit, that he looked upon him as a very dull fellow; but the nobleman assured the king, that whatever he thought of him, George was a very witty and ingenious man; whereupon the king was resolved to make further trial of him, and took him into a large hall, where there was a great number of fine pictures, and amongst the rest he shewed him the picture of Christ on the cross, and asked him if he knew whom that was? but George made himself very ignorant, and answered, No. Why, said the king, I will tell you, if you do not know. This is the picture of our Saviour on the cross, that on the right hand is the Pope's, and that on the left is my own. Whereupon George replied—I humbly thank your majesty for the information, for though I have often heard that our Saviour was crucified between two thieves, yet I never knew who they were before.

George being one day travelling to London, and the weather being very cold and rainy, he alighted at an inn to refresh and warm himself; but the fire being surrounded with people, he scarcely could see it.—George finding this to be the case, calls to the hostler, and orders him to give to his horse, at the door, half a peck of oysters. You mean oats, sir. No, no, says George, it is oysters; and base is that horse that will not eat oysters. The people at the fire hearing this started up and ran to the door to see the horse eating oysters. The moment they left their seats, George took the opportunity to plant himself before the fire with a table and a cloth beside him. In a little time

they came back again one by one, saying, This horse will not eat oysters. Well, well, says George, he is too full, or too saucy; so you may bring them in, and I will eat them myself.

One time after this, George being in company about twenty miles from London, and on his way homeward, a fine gilded coach came up after him, and being informed that it belonged to the bishop of Canterbury, and was going to London for his lordship, George addresses himself to the coachman to have a passage with him in the coach to London. So he bargained with the coachman for two dollars to carry him to the Bell Inn, on London-bridge; the one he gave him in hand as he entered the coach, and he was to give him the other as soon as he saw him come out of the coach-door. So away the coachman drives in all haste, in which time George writes some satirical lines upon the bishop of Canterbury, which he scratched on the inside of the coach. When near London, George took a knife, and cut a great hole in the back side of the coach, through which he came out; and to make his promise good to the coachman, that he was to give him the other dollar as soon as he saw him come out at the coach-door. The poor coachman drove on till he came to the aforesaid inn, where he alighted and opened the door to let out his passenger; but seeing the coach empty, and a great hole in the backside of it, he cried, I believe I have had the devil in the coach. The people of the inn came flocking about to see what was done; and when the bishop read the lines, it was concluded it must have been done by George, so they could make nothing of it.

George went into the mint one day, when they were melting gold. One of them asked George if he would have his hat full of gold? George readily accepted; but it burnt the bottom out of his hat, as they knew it would, and for that bout they foiled George. However, George, to be even with them,

bought a fine large hat, and caused a plate of copper to be put between the hat and the lining; and, returning next day, they jestingly asked him if he would have another hatful of gold? He said he would. They gave it him red hot, and George now laughed at them in his turn, telling them, That this new hat was a good one, and stood fire better than the old one. And so he carried it off honestly; and, being prosecuted to return it, he excused himself, telling the judge that he took nothing but what was given him; so he was honourably acquitted, and the other heartily laughed at.

A Scotchman being redueed to poverty, made his complaint to George to put him on a method to get money. George told him, if he would follow his directions he would try it. There was an old miser, a usurer and money-changer, hard by; George told the fellow to pretend an errand to the miser, and when he came to the table where the heaps of money lay, to thrust his hand among the gold, but to lift none, and to run off. This the poor fellow did, and was chased by the miser and his servant, who ran after him into the streets, crying, Stop the thief! The poor fellow was stopped, (as George had desired to let them catch him.) George appeared in the mob, and went along with him, who was carried before a judge, when he was searched, and nothing being found upon him, he was acquitted, and the miser fined in a large sum for accusing him. Afterwards George desired him to go to the same place, and thrust in both his hands, and lift up as much as he could, and run off. This he did, but the miser told him he was not such a fool as to follow him, for he knew he designed to play the fool to have him fined again. By these means the poor fellow was enriched and afterwards lived honestly.

Two drunken fellows fell to beating one another on the streets of London, which caused a great crowd o

people throng together to see what it was; a tailor being at work in a garret, about three or four stories high, heard a noise in the street, and looking over the window, fell, and alighted upon an old man who was walking on the street; the poor tailor was more afraid than hurt, but the man he fell on died directly. His son caused the tailor to be apprehended, and tried for the murder of his father. The jury could not bring it in a wilful murder, neither could they altogether free the tailor; so the jury gave it over to the judges, and the judges to the king. The king asked George's advice in the matter. Why, says George, I will give you my opinion in a minute; you must cause the tailor to stand on the same spot where the old gentleman was when he was killed by the tailor, and then let the old gentleman's son go up to the same window, jump down, and kill the tailor as he did his father; for I can make no more of it. It was a mercy for the tailor that the old gentleman was beneath him, or he had been killed; and it was the old gentleman's lot or misfortune to die there. The tailor's adversary hearing this sentence, would not jump, so the tailor got off.

After this an English squire, who professed to be better versed in poetry than George, laid a wager with another gentleman, five guineas to one, that George would not metre the first words that he would say to him in the morning, when newly awakened out of his sleep; so the gentleman went the night before, and told George the story, and bade him be on his guard, for in the morning they would certainly come, and that very early. At midnight, if they will, says George, I will order my servant to let them in.

So the English squire sat up all night, conferring with his friends, whether to put a high verse to him, or mean simple words—thinking that George would be sitting up at night meditating on an answer: so they all agreed, that mean and simple words he would not be thinking on, and would have no answer provided for such. So

away they came in the morning very early, with several gentlemen in company to hear the diversion. George's servant opened the door, according to his master's orders. The squire entered the room first, and awaked George out of his sleep, then said—

Rise up, you madman, and put on your clothes.

To which George answered—

O thou hast lost thy wad, man, for I am none of those.

The squire confessed he was fairly beat, and would match with him no more. Then another gentleman would hold five guineas, that he would give him a word or line which he could not metre at the first answer, and to answer it directly as soon as he was done speaking; but George ordered him first to table the money, and then to proceed, which he did, and said as follows:—

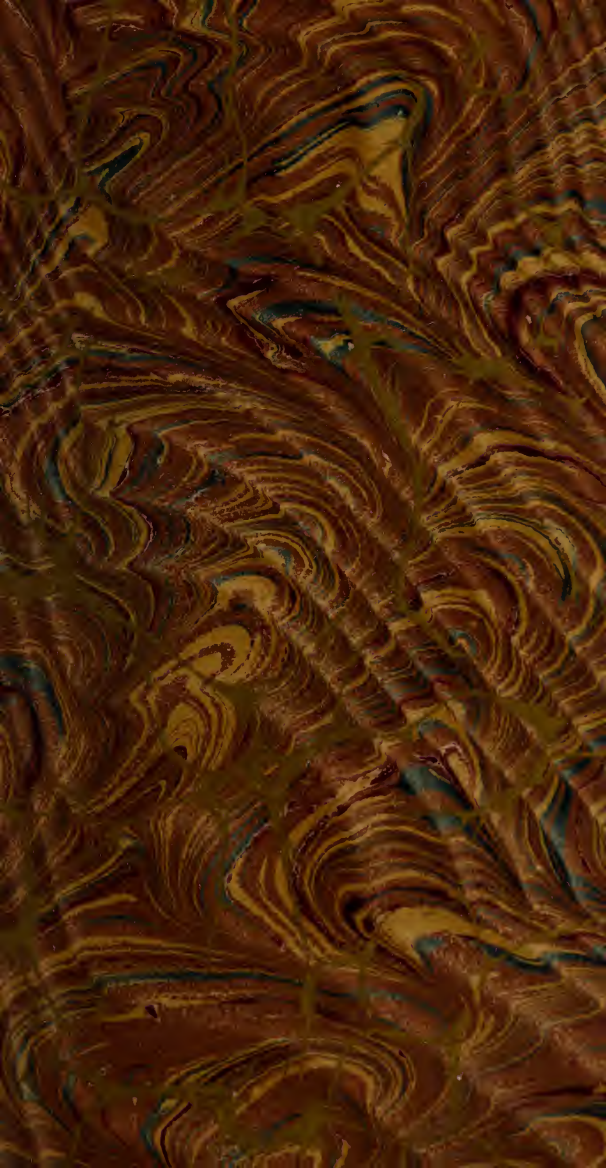
My belly rumbled, and then I f——ed.

George, gripping the money, answered—

A fool and his money are soon parted.

Then they all cried out he was fairly beaten, and what George had said was really true; but he would never lay any more wagers concerning poetry.

George being now far advanced in years, and being weary of the great fatigue and folly of the court fashions, a short time before his death, he had a great desire to visit his native country, and the place of his nativity; therefore he petitioned the king for leave to do so, which was granted. So he set out for Scotland, and went to the parish of Buchanan, in the west, where he visited all his relations and friends. But George staying longer from court than the time allowed, the king sent him several messages to return, to which he returned no answer. At last the king sent him a letter, threatening, that if he did not appear before him in the space of 20 days, he would send his Lyon heralds for him; to which George returned the following answer:—

My honour'd liege, and sovereign king,
Of your boasting great I dread nothing.
On your feud and favour I'll fairly venture,
Or that day I'll be where few kings enter.

W. & T. Fordyce, Printers, 15, Grey Street, Newcastle.